

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
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O 022120Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 683

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 2738

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

EXDIS

FOR ARA-LA/CEN DIRECTOR DAVID LAZAR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, CS

SUBJECT: BURSTIN/LAZAR MEMCON

REF: SAN JOSE 2705

1. FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO CALLED ME TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY MORNING JULY 2 AND SAID THAT PRESIDENT ODUBER HAD ASKED HIM TO LET ME KNOW ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS THAT HE HAD OBTAINED A COPY OF BURSTIN'S MEMORANDUM REPORTING CONVERSATION WITH LAZAR. FACIO SAID HE AND ODUBER FELT CERTAIN THAT THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THE MEMORANDUM DID NOT REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. KNOWING DAVID LAZAR, THEY ALSO FELT CERTAIN THAT LAZAR WOULD NOT HAVE EXPRESSED SUCH VIEWS AS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM. THEY SUSPECTED THAT THIS MEMORANDUM WAS ANOTHER PART OF BURSTIN'S CONTINUING GAME TO ENCOURAGE THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESS AND END THE ODUBER GOVERNMENT. THEY KNEW THAT THE REMARKS ABOUT THE DETERIORATING CONDITIONS IN THE COUNTRY, THE INACTION OF THE ODUBER GOVERNMENT, AND THE LIKELIHOOD OF A CRISIS BY THE END OF THE YEAR ARE VIEWS THAT BURSTIN HAS EXPRESSED IN THE PAST TO OTHERS. THEY BELIEVE, THEREFORE, THAT BURSTIN MAY HAVE MADE THOSE STATEMENTS AND ATTRIBUTED THEM TO LAZAR IN ORDER TO SUGGEST TO FIGUERES THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT SHARES BURSTIN'S ESTIMATE AND THEREFORE IT IS APPRO-  
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PRIATE FOR FIGUERES TO ACT. THEY THOUGHT THAT THE MENTION

OF MILITARY INTERVENTION WOULD BE CONSIDERED SO UNLIKELY THAT THIS WOULD NOT BE A DETERRENT TO FIGUERES. FACIO SAID NEITHER FIGUERES NOR BURSTIN KNOWS THAT ODUBER HAS A COPY OF THE MEMORANDUM. THEY HAVE HESITATED TAKING ACTION AGAINST BURSTIN IN THE PAST, IN ORDER TO AVOID A SERIOUS BREAK WITH FIGUERES. HOWEVER, BURSTIN HAS GONE TOO FAR AND THEY WILL HAVE TO BEGIN DISCREETLY TO PULL THE RUG FROM UMXER HIM. FACIO DESCRIBED BURSTIN AS A VERY INTELLIGENT BUT COMPLETELY UNPRINCIPLED PERSON WHO IS PREPARED TO DO ANYTHING TO BE IN A POSITION OF POWER BEHIND THE THRONE.

2. FACIO AGAIN EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT FIGUERES PROBABLY WOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO CARRY OUT A COUP D'ETAT, PARTLY BECAUSE HE DID NOT HAVE THE ORGANIZATION NOR ASSURANCES OF OTHER SUPPORT NEEDED FOR ITS SUCCESS. FACIO SAID THAT HE WAS NOT MAKING AN OFFICIAL PROTEST NOR ASKING FOR ANY ACTION TO BE TAKEN. HE MERELY WANTED ME TO KNOW THAT THE GOVERNMENT DID HAVE A COPY OF THE BURSTIN MEMORANDUM AND WHAT ITS VIEWS WERE CONCERNING IT.

3. I THANKED FACIO VERY MUCH FOR HIS UNDERSTANDING AND FOR THE CONFIDENCE SHOWN. I TOLD HIM THAT A COPY OF THE MEMORANDUM HAD BEEN GIVEN TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER FOR TRANSMISSION TO ME. I HAD FOUND THE CONTENTS TO BE SO CONTRARY TO U.S. POLICY AND SO COMPLETELY RIDICULOUS THAT I HAD REQUESTED PETER JOHNSON TO GO TO BURSTIN IMMEDIATELY AND EXPRESS MY ANGER AND ANNOYANCE THAT SUCH A DOCUMENT SHOULD HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, SINCE IT WAS SO CONTRARY TO U.S. POLICY AND OUT OF KEEPING WITH LAZAR'S BEHAVIOR. I MENTIONED HAVING ALSO PERSONALLY EXPRESSED THE SAME SENTIMENTS TO FORMER PRESIDENT FIGUERES.

4. I TOOK THE OCCASION TO AGAIN REPEAT U.S. SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF COSTA RICA AND FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY UNDER WHICH IT LIVES. I AGAIN STRESSED, AS I DID TO FIGUERES, THE IMPORTANCE OF COSTA RICA'S CONTINUED DEMOCRATIC TRADITIONS PLUS ITS COURAGE AND INDEPENDENCE TO THE MAINTENANCE OF ITS INTERNATIONAL STATURE. I ALSO EXPLAINED THE VERY LIMITED MEANING OF THE WORD "INTERVENE" WHICH LAZAR HAD USED TO MEAN ONLY EXPRESSING TO OUR COSTA RICAN FRIENDS OUR VIEWS ON POTENTIALLY NEGATIVE OR HARMFUL DEVELOPMENTS ABOUT WHICH WE MIGHT HEAR. I STRESSED OUR CONTINUED BELIEF IN NON-INTERVENTION IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF COSTA RICA OR ANY OTHER COUNTRY.  
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TM FACIO SAID HE BELIEVED HE KNEW ENOUGH ABOUT THE U.S. TO BE SURE THAT THE U.S. POSITION WAS AS I STATED IT. HE SAID COSTA RICA WOULD HOPE THAT THE UNITED STATES, AS ITS OLDEST AND DEAREST FRIEND, WOULD WISH TO MAKE ITS VIEWS KNOWN ON MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE. HE DID NOT CONSIDER THIS AS INTERVENTION.

6. I PROMISED TO SEND FACIO A COPY OF LAZAR'S ACCOUNT OF THE

CONVERSATION WITH BURSTIN AND HAVE SINCE DONE SO. I ALSO PROMISED  
TO SHARE WITH HIM ANY OFFICIAL RESPONSE THAT LAZAR MIGHT MAKE  
TO BURSTIN'S MEMORANDUM.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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